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ABSTRACT

Suggested topics, beginning sentences, and illustrated ideas can motivate young writers, stimulate their imaginations, and give them reference points for the development of their thoughts on paper. This document offers illustrated questions and seasonal topics as writing ideas for students in the primary grades. Creative ideas for students in the intermediate grades include story starters, unfinished stories, story topics, ideas for the first week of school, writing table ideas, ideas for a classroom resource book, and the uses of cinquain or pantomime. (RI)

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Foreword

This publication is for use by classroom teachers and supervisors. The purpose of Creative Writing ideas is to provide opportunities for creativity in writing and to build language in oral and written communication. Teachers will become more sensitive to the opportunities for developing in their students sequential thinking using colorful, descriptive language as the students are exposed to opportunities and experiences in which they can see their progress, share their authorship with others, and enjoy their work and that of their peer group. The ideas are not all inclusive, but they can be enlarged, incorporated with ideas already available in basal texts, and/or used as a motivation instrument so necessary with many students.

The material was edited by the Language Program of the Division of Arts and Humanities, Bureau of Curriculum Services, Pennsylvania Department of Education. Comments and suggestions regarding the contents and requests for the materials should be addressed to:

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Acknowledgement for contributions is also given to the following: Elementary teachers in Peters Township School District and Jean Garrison, language arts coordinator, Bristol Township School District, Bucks County.

Introduction

In language development there is a sequence that must be developed step by step and opportunities provided for real or vicarious experiences so that concepts can be meaningful and lasting. The steps are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Too often writing is an assigned task and the student is more concerned about what the teacher wants or will accept than in putting his or her own mind to work to create ideas, feelings, and experiences.

Creative Writing ideas as developed by Peters Township School District in Washington County, is a compilation of suggestions, story starters, hints and art work that should motivate the reluctant writer, stimulate the more fluent author to deeper and more picturesque language, and give the very adept writer a quick point of departure to develop his or her thoughts on paper.

Creative Writing ideas
for
Primary Grades

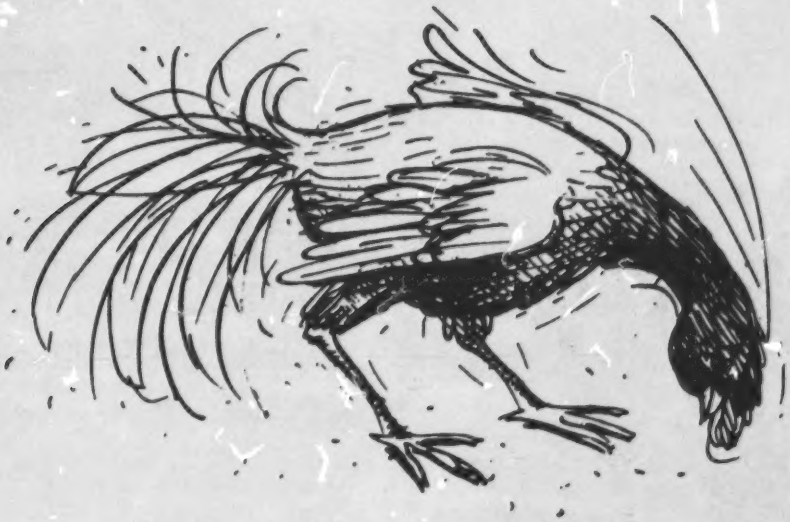
How would you feel if your pencil made music whenever you wrote with it?

What do pigs dream? What do you dream?

If you had a parrot what would you teach him to say?

What would you do if you got a seal for your birthday?

This is Mr. Bunny Big Ears.
Can you tell of an adventure bunny had?

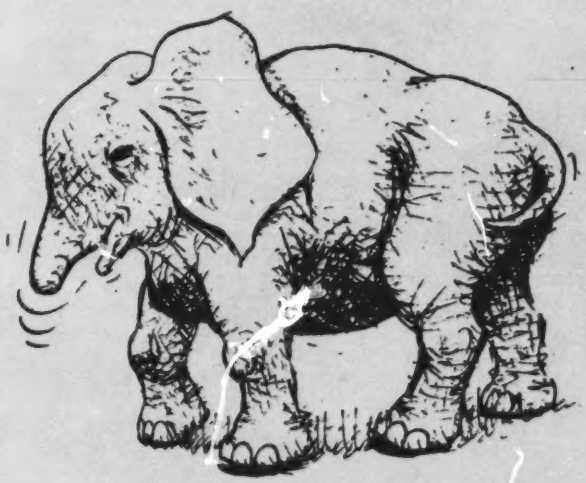


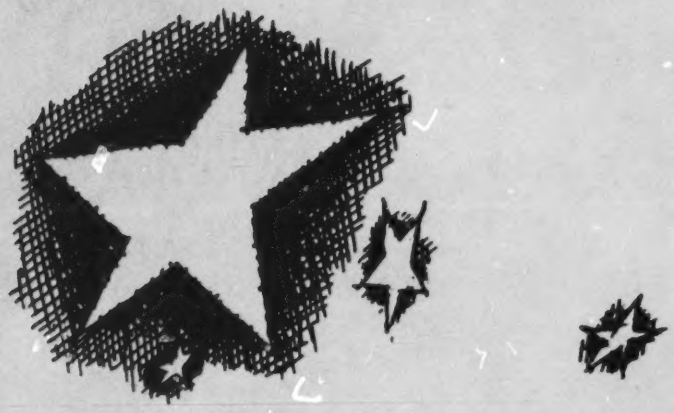
Why is the old hen so sad?

Tall Tales

A funny lion was born without a tail. He thought and thought about what he could do to get one. Then suddenly...

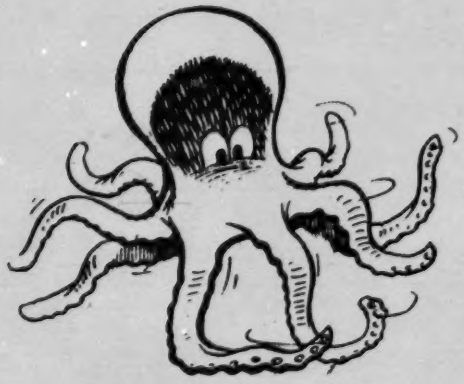
Can you write a story about an elephant that had no trunk? What kind of adventures might he have?





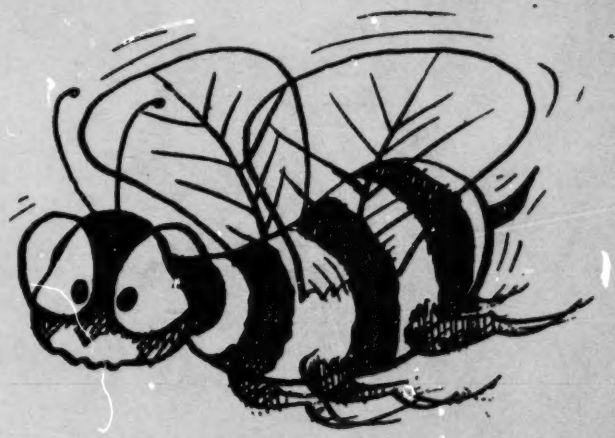
Star light, star bright
The first star I've seen tonight
I wish I may, I wish I might
Have the wish I wish tonight.
Write a story about a wish that you would like to have come true.

Why do we call this ocean creature a crab?



Why do we call this ocean creature an octopus?

Why is Buzzy Bee looking so happy? Write a little story about him. These words may help you.



honey hive sweet flowers good fly

Katie Kangaroo is teaching her baby about good manners. Write some rules that you think Katie should teach Kitty.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

One morning Bob said, "I had a strange dream last night. I had wings that let me fly like a bird over the trees."

Make up a wonderful dream that you would like to have come true.

Suppose your neck were as long as that of a giraffe. How would your life be changed?

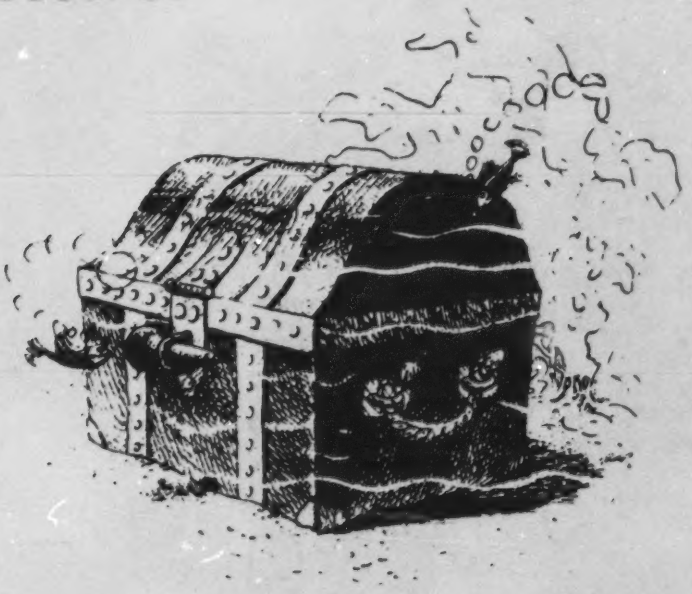
This little mouse learned a lesson.

Write a story about it.

How brave a ladybug must be!
Each drop of rain is big as she.

Can you imagine what <u>you</u> would do if raindrops fell as big as you?

What do you think is waiting inside this sunken treasure?



What do you see out this window? Do you think that you should go out or should you stay inside?

Busy Beaver, skating by,
Tell me what you have and why?

Creative Writing ideas
for
Intermediate Grades

STORY STARTERS

I was all alone; somewhere a door slammed shut!

He was the runt of the litter, but I took him home anyway and named him "Bones."

"Come with me, " said a deep, husky voice, "And I will make you a king."

When I stepped out to pick up the morning paper, I saw that all the other houses had been removed from our street.

Sam stretched as high as he could to reach the shelf, but it remained one inch away.

The family awoke to the smell of.....

How could he possibly have gotten inside that small hole?

All at once John jumped up and ran to the window.

When I put my hand into the mailbox, something cold and wet touched my hand.

Mary raced from the room, forgetting to close the door of the cage.

I looked and looked, but the money was gone.

To the astonishment of her companions, Melody ran to the rescue.

STORY STARTERS

.Imagine that you have a space ship that can take you to another planet. Tell of your experiences.

.Imagine that you can put on a special pair of glasses and see a thousand years in the future. Describe a scene that you might witness.

."The Invisible Child"--Tell children to pretend they are invisible. Describe what they would see on a visit to the class.

Display about three funny pictures. Discuss just briefly in order to get some descriptive words from the class to put on the board. Then let the boys and girls begin to write a story about the picture they chose.

Thankful stories for holiday time. List things on the board the children say they are thankful for, i.e., family, home, friends. Then have children write something <u>special</u> that they were thankful for.

<u>IF Stories - to speak or write about</u>

1. If you were a circus pony, what adventure might you have?
2. If you were a lost dog, what might happen to you?
3. If you were a dog that saw a turtle in the road, what might happen?
4. If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go?

UNFINISHED STORIES

Bill saw a queer round-shaped object landing on the lawn. He ran toward it, expecting to see spacemen step out. The lid opened. Then suddenly Bill was pulled inside.....

"I know fairies aren't real," said Joyce.

"Is that so?" replied a strange voice. Then Joyce felt herself going to sleep. A moment later she awakened in the middle of a fairy council, all bound up in cobwebs, unable to move.....

"The rain was lashing at the train windows. The lights on the train flicked on and off. Everyone seemed a bit tense as we rumbled through the night. The conductor had just entered our car. There was fear in his eyes. Then.....

It was a rainy, windy night. "The sky must be mad at me," thought Jerry. Raindrops pounded on the windows. The wind howled like a whipped dog.

Jerry was alone in the big, old house. The whole house rattled and creaked in the wind. All the rooms were big, too big. Jerry was scared, but he wouldn't say so, not even to himself.

Lightning stabbed a tree near-by. Thunder roared. Then the lights went out!

All at once Jerry heard a funny noise on the stairs.....

Story Topics

1. My mother told me not to go into the woods alone.....
2. I am the pencil you write with.
3. The time I was really scared!
4. I am your baseball.
5. Jack jumped out of the box.
6. If I were an eyebrow.
7. I am the brakes on your car.
8. I am your bat.
9. I am the chair you sit on.
10. I am the swing on the playground.
11. If I were a toothpick.
12. I am a window.
13. My brother and I.....
14. I am a piece of chewing gum.
15. I am the fountain you drink from.
16. "Oh, my! Oh, my!" laughed Sam.
17. I am your shoes.
18. I wish I were a.....
19. We have a new student in our room.
20. If I could change the world.....
21. This is the funniest thing I ever saw.
22. If I were the teacher.
23. The ice skate went off by itself.
24. The Smith's have a most unusual dog.....
25. Today is my appointment at the dentist.....
26. The kite ran away from the string.

IDEAS FOR THE FIRST WEEKS OF SCHOOL

1. Telling about yourself, your family, likes, and dislikes.
2. Discussion of school safety rules-make chart, stress correct use of capitals, punctuation, and spelling in rules.
3. School heading for papers-margins, capitals, etc.
4. Creative writing
   a. about self and family
   b. what's in the magic box?
5. Draw a picture and tell about something you did this summer.
6. Draw a picture of your house and describe it to us.
7. Look at a picture of an animal, (puppy, kitten, etc.) and tell why you would like to have it for your own.
8. Tell a story about the nicest thing that ever happened to you.
9. Listening--I went to the store with my mother and we bought_____.
10. Each child repeats, then adds another item.
10. Oral story - started by teacher, continued by one student, then another, etc.--students write final paragraph for their own ending.
11. Brainstorming - Write about this little box. What could be in it? Could it be magic?
12. Dinosaurs - What if you lived as a prehistoric plant or animal and dinosaurs were your enemies or friends?
13. Colors - How do some colors make you feel?
14. Enemies - What are the enemies of humanity? Can enemies every become friends?
15. Heroes and Heroines - Who is the bravest person you can think of? Why?

WRITING TABLE IDEAS

Some of my favorite things are_____

What did I discover on the way to school?_____

The things I like best on a farm are_____

I like these wild animals because_____

Some things I like best about my school are_____

I like to help mother do_____

My favorite zoo animals are_____

When I go to the circus I see_____

My best friends are_____

I like school because_____

Some things that are tall are_____

Some things that are short are_____

What I can find in my back yard_____

My favorite toys are_____

What can_____do? (animal, person, etc.)

What can go bang, bang?_____

What can go zoom, zoom. Etc._____

How I can help father_____

How I can help prevent fires_____

I can ride on these things._____

Dangerous things I should not touch_____

What should I do if I meet a skunk? (elephant, etc.)_____

What if lemons made people sour?_____

What if you had a tiny dog the size of your pocket?_____

What if you had a pet monkey that was invisible?_____

What if you were the teacher of this class?_____

I. Creative Writing

1. "Box of Phrases Game"
   Each child selects a phrase from the "phrase box" and writes a story using his or her phrase. (underline phrase)

2. Display a colorful and interesting book jacket and have children write what they think the book is about.

3. Read the last sentence from a short story. Each child writes a story that will end that way.

4. "Story Box" - Contains suggestive titles for creative writing in child's spare time.

5. Display an interesting magazine picture. Have children write a story about it.

6. First sentence starter - let the children complete the story.

7. Cut out newspaper headlines and have children write a story to match the headlines.

8. Give a vivid description of a place. Have each child write a story in connection with that place.

9. Give the class four major events of a story. Each child writes a story, putting the events in any order and making the details as interesting as possible.

10. Give the class a first line for a poem -- have them complete the poem.

II. Creative Expression (Oral)

1. Hold up a piece of colored construction paper -- "What does this remind you of?"

2. Show class a box. "What do you think that I have in this box?"

3. Display a large magazine picture. Have each child tell what he or she thinks is happening and why.

4. Use a large magazine picture. Have class (divided in two teams) give as many good adjectives as possible in one minute. (Teacher writes on board as team calls out adjectives.)

5. Have children suggest caption for pictures.

6. Topic Box -- each child chooses a topic and talks for two minutes on chosen topic.

CINQUAIN

First line -- title

Second line -- two words, describing title

Third line -- three action words

Fourth line -- four words expressing a feeling

Fifth line -- another word for title word

Examples

Storm
white, windy,
howls, blows, whistles,
shiver in your boots,
blizzard.

Doll
cuddly, pretty,
talks, listens, sleeps,
helps me play house,
friend.

Wagon
wooden, wheeled,
rolls, carries, creaks,
a very bumpy ride,
conestoga.

Variation

Line 1. subject
2. describe subject
3. express action of the subject
4. expresses writer's feelings concerning the subject
5. expresses a characteristic of the word

Example

Chipmunk
Brown, lightning,
Digging holes everywhere,
Holes are not wanted,
Nuisance.

PANTOMIME

Pantomime how you think someone else may feel in a certain situation.

Examples

1. Discover a Christmas present hidden in a closet.
2. Take a bite of a sandwich which tastes strange.
3. Find the door is locked with no one at home.
4. Feel the pain when you get hit in the face with a ball.
5. Act disappointed when your parents shut off your favorite television program.

STORY IDEAS

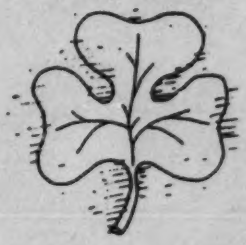
1. Place a story "idea box" in the room. Students drop in opening sentences of stories they would like to write themselves or would like to have other students write.
2. Choose a problem from the cafeteria, playground, or halls, and write a group editorial for the school newspaper, including a definition of the problem, supporting evidence, and a recommendation or solution.
3. Write stories that make it possible to avoid certain and unpleasant death--(e.g.-turkey at Thanksgiving.)
   If I were a turkey at Thanksgiving I would fly up on the hay stack and then or I would pretend to eat a poison tomato.
4. Combine two different animals and write a description of the results--how it lives and acts, what its feelings are or a bird and an animal--squorse--squirrel and horse or dog-faced butterfly.
5. Pick out a main character in a story and write a poster ad about him or her.
6. Just before reading the ending to one of our literature stories have the children write what they think will happen and then read them orally to the class.
7. Imagine that you have just seen a bank robbery. Describe the event as seen by you-the witness, by the bank teller and by the robber.
8. Make a progressive chart of shades and tints of yellows (or blues, reds, etc.) to match a list of related verbs (e.g. dance, skip, walk, stroll, stumble, crawl).
9. Write a story that distinctly takes place at a certain time in history without mentioning the date. Trade stories and write the time or period at the top.

Creative Writing

Seasonal Ideas

March 17 is St. Patrick's Day. St. Patrick's Day is a day when you might see a leprechaun. Where would you look for one? What would you do if you found a leprechaun in your pocket? What does a leprechaun think about?

Write a story about leprechauns. Write a title for your story.

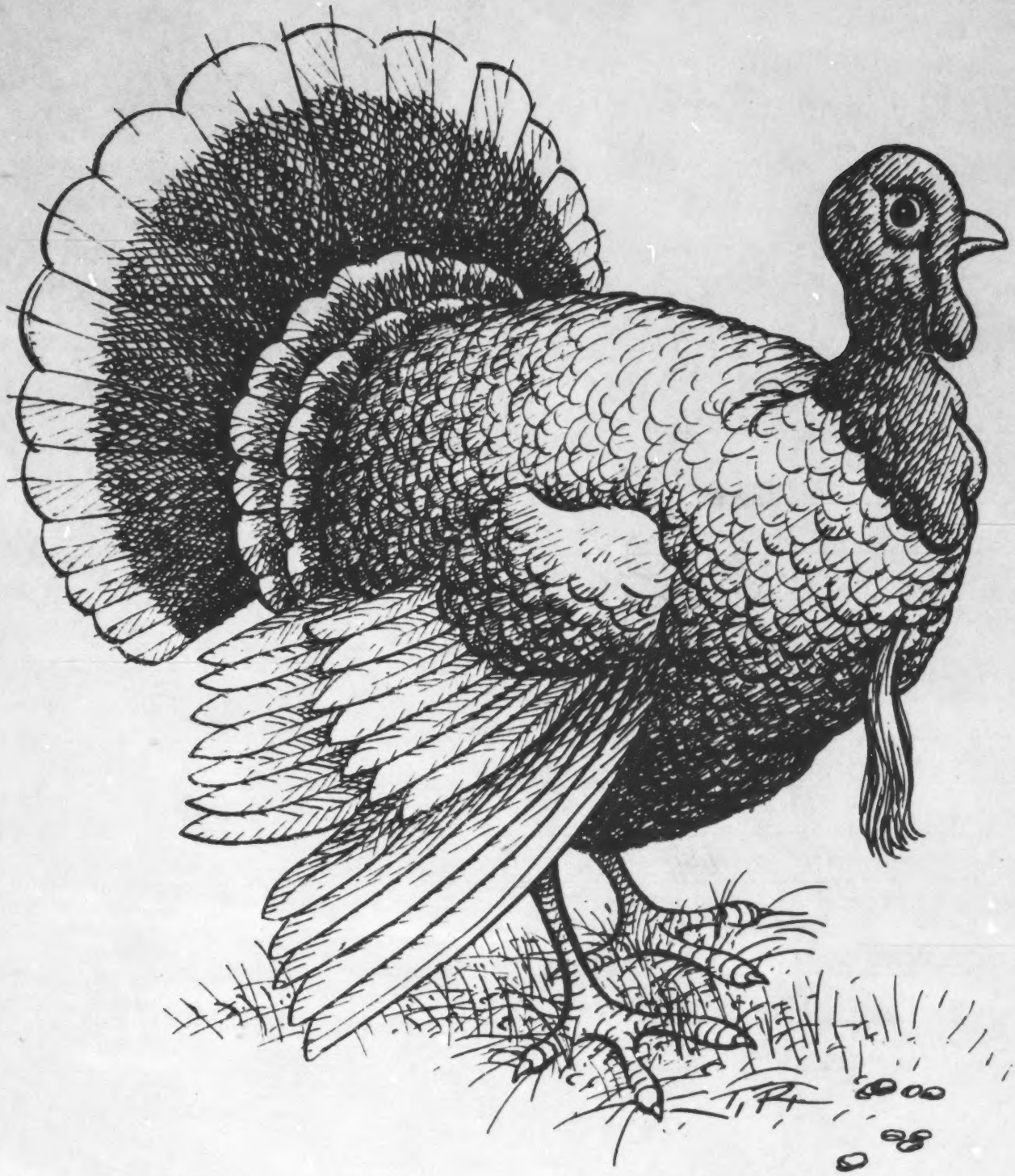


Make believe that you are a little ghost. Your ghost mother just told you that you can go out on Halloween night for the first time. What will you do on your first Halloween? Don't forget -- you're just a baby ghost. Tell about it here.

What would you do if you were a ghost and this were your very first Halloween?

What is going on here?

Why is Tom Turkey crying?



Hi! I'm Mr. Thomas Turkey and I'm not so sure I like your way of celebrating Thanksgiving. Write a story about me.

Write the sentences neatly and correctly.

1. soon christmas will be here.
1. _____
2. christmas is on december 25.
2. _____
3. we will be waiting for santa.
3. _____
4. he comes on the night before christmas.
4. _____
5. his reindeer will bring him.
5. _____
6. their names are dasher, dancer, prancer, vixen, comet, cupid, donner and blitzen.
6. _____

Would Santa like your work?

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